

Technical Assistance Grants (US EPA)

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Purpose of TAG Funds

- The TAG program provides money to community groups to pay for technical advisors to interpret and explain technical reports, site conditions, and EPA's proposed cleanup proposals and decisions.
- At Superfund sites nationally, TAGs have been used for targeted oversight of investigations, cleanup activities, and redevelopment efforts.

TAGs – Budgetary Issues

- EPA will award a TAG grant for up to \$50,000. Additional funds may be available and the grant initially can be used for up to three years with extensions possible if needed. Only one TAG can be given for each Superfund site.
- To receive a TAG grant, the TAG group must contribute a matching share of at least 20% of the total project costs. This match is usually not difficult to provide and usually consists of donating volunteer hours and other “in-kind” services.

Use of TAG Funds

The technical advisor can be paid for the following:

1. Reviewing site-related documents from EPA or others.
2. Meet with your group and other community members to explain site information.
3. Make site visits, when appropriate and necessary, to learn more about site activities.
4. Travel to meetings and hearings about the site.
5. Evaluate plans for reusing the site after it is cleaned up.
6. Interpret and explain health-related information.

Use of TAG Funds

The majority of TAG funds must be used for the technical advisor, but the following are also considered allowable expenses:

1. Supplies.
2. Office Equipment.
3. Pro-rated portion of rent.
4. Assistance with grant administration.
5. Incorporation costs.

Use of TAG Funds

TAG Funds **cannot** be used for the following:

1. Travel expenses of group members.
2. Lawsuits or other legal actions.
3. Lobbying.
4. Social activities, fund raising, etc.
5. Tuition or training expenses for group members or the technical advisor (except for one-time health and safety training for the advisor to gain access to the site).
6. Collection of new health or primary data.
7. Reopening or challenging final EPA decisions.

Eligibility of Community Group

- Your group may apply for a TAG if your members' health, economic well being, or enjoyment of the environment is, or may be, hurt by the Superfund site. It is very important that your group represents the community at large.
- Your group does not need to incorporate for the purposes of applying for the TAG grant; however, to receive a TAG your group must incorporate.

Eligibility of Community Group

Community groups that can apply for a TAG grant include:

1. A community group which was formed because of issues and concerns it had about the site.
2. A group that has been actively involved at the site and that includes all the affected individuals and groups who joined in applying for the TAG.
3. A group made up of several groups that came together to deal with community concerns about the site and its effects on the surrounding area.

Eligibility of Community Groups

Groups that are ineligible for a TAG include:

1. Potentially Responsible Parties.
2. Groups representing or receiving money or services from a PRP.
3. Academic institutions like colleges or universities.
4. Groups affiliated with a national organization.
5. Political subdivisions like states, counties, cities, townships or tribes.
6. Groups created by, representing, or receiving money or services from any of the groups described above that are not eligible.

Application Process

The total application and award process typically takes between five and six months.

1. The community group writes EPA a Letter of Intent.
2. EPA informs the rest of the community through advertisement in a local newspaper that your group is interested in a TAG.
3. Other interested groups have 30 days to attempt to join up with your group or write their own Letter of Intent if they choose to compete for the TAG funding.
4. After the initial 30-day period, interested groups will have another 30 days to submit applications

Post-Award Administration

- Reimbursement requests (SF-270) must be submitted to the EPA requesting reimbursement for expenses incurred including technical advisor costs.
- Progress Reports must be submitted quarterly.
- MBE/WBE and Financial Status Reports must be submitted annually.

Additional Questions

Resources:

Technical Assistance Grant (TAG) Program: Fact Sheet

- Hardcopies are available and the Fact Sheet can be accessed at http://www.epa.gov/superfund/community/tag/download/quick_5-15-03.pdf

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